Digital Age Learners

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In the educational system today, there is a divide between an older version of education that teaches students the ‘basic’ skills of what they need to know and then the digital age that inputs creativity and critical thinking skills. Students already use a great deal of technology in their everyday lives with emails, text messages, and video games, why not incorporate technology in the educational system. A great deal of my students enjoy the challenge of multi-tasking. They ask to listen to music while they are taking a test because to them it helps them to concentrate. For students that are active in the classroom, I like to give them something extra to do with technology so that they are able to stay focused on the activity in which they are doing, which may include a digital timer. These are all examples in which I use in my own personal classroom and they seem to help my students to be successful.

Students growing up in today’s time have the ability to learn in a variety of methods. Students now can listen to music, while completing an assignment, and checking messages on their phones. The issues that rises is, is the technology helpful and it is teaching the students to multitask. The various stimulations actually help students to continue learning and growing brain cells. According to, Marc Prensky, “Based on the latest research in neurobiology, there is no longer any question that stimulation of various kinds actually changes brain structures and affects the way people think, and that these transformations go on throughout life.” Having various forms of technologies and learning styles actually allows the student’s brain to stimulated in various ways which allows the students to continue to learn.

Students can now multitask while completing assignments, which is why in an older version classroom many students get bored and cause disruption and behavior problems. When we place students in an environment that does not fit their learning needs then we are doing an disservice to them and really to the community. Students need to learn and take advantage of the digital learning style because ultimately that is the type of world they will be living in when they get out of school. Students need to learn how to multitask and set priorities such that when they get into the workforce they are still able to do this. I do see the differences in the various learning styles in the classroom and I know personally in my own room I am always trying to learn new in tentative things to use in my lessons. This is not always the case and many think that there is one way to teach and that is the only way, which is not fair for the students.

Classrooms should go along with the digital learning style to help students stay engaged. Students are asked to sit in a classroom for long periods of time and are not physically engaged. According to Marc Presnky, the trick to incorporating digital learning into the classroom is to include games that actually have the necessary content but they are enjoyable. Marc Presnkey stated in *The Reformers Are Leaving Our Schools in the 20th Century*, “Unless we change how things are taught and what is taught, in all of our classrooms, we won’t be able to provide an education that has our kids fighting to be in school rather than one that effectively pushes one-third to one-half of them out”.

The older version of teaching is just not working anymore, the education system has to be adjusted to meet the needs of the students and the world in which they will be living in. If teachers do not adapt to the learning style of the new age it will be difficult to grasp the students that are following behind. Marc Presenky stated in *Backup Education*, “The real issue lies in the fact that by continuing to teach the “backup” stuff, there is no room to teach for the future.” The differences in the various learning styles is seeing that just asking students to memorize facts is not going to cut it. Students have to be ask to use critical thinking skills and their creativity to build and solve problems. In order for students to succeed in a technology world that have to have digital learning and that means that education has to follow the trend.

Students will continue to learn and adapt to the digital age, because that is what they were born in to. It will be helpful to create the education system around that learning style, because it will accommodate a great deal of students. I believe it is our job as educators to help all students succeed and to become responsible, successful, and influential members of society.

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